

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FISH AND GAME COMMISSION
INITIAL STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR REGULATORY ACTION
(Pre-Publication of Notice Statement)

Amend Section 363
Title 14, California Code of Regulations
Re: Pronghorn Antelope

- I. Date of Initial Statement of Reasons: December 10, 2004
- II. Dates and Locations of Scheduled Hearings:
- (a) Notice Hearing: Date: February 4, 2005
Location: San Diego, California
- (b) Discussion/ Adoption Hearing: Date: May 4, 2005
Location: Sacramento, California
- III. Description of Regulatory Action:
- (a) Statement of Specific Purpose of Regulation Change and Factual Basis for Determining that Regulation Change is Reasonably Necessary:
1. Number of Tags
- This proposed regulatory action provides for the number of tags for existing zones in a series of ranges and allows for issuing doe tags, if desired. Existing regulations specify the number of pronghorn antelope hunting tags for each hunt. In order to maintain hunting quality in accordance with management goals and objectives, tag quotas for hunts need to be adjusted periodically. Final tag quotas for each zone will be identified and reported in the Final Statement of Reasons based upon findings from the annual winter surveys.
- Ranges are necessary because final quotas cannot be determined until survey data are analyzed. Winter surveys are scheduled for January, 2005. Analysis of survey results will be completed by March, 2005. Final tag quotas will allow for a biologically appropriate harvest of bucks and does in the population and will achieve/maintain buck ratios at or above minimum levels specified in appropriate management plans. Administrative procedures and the Fish and Game Code require the Fish and Game Commission to receive proposed changes to existing regulations prior to the time winter pronghorn antelope surveys are completed. The proposed ranges of pronghorn antelope tags for 2005 are as follows:

Pronghorn Antelope Tag Allocation Ranges - 2005						
Hunt Area	Archery-Only Season		General Season			
			Period 1		Period 2	
	Buck	Doe	Buck	Doe	Buck	Doe
Zone 1 – Mount Dome	1-10	0-3	3-60	0-20	0	0
Zone 2 – Clear Lake	1-10	0-3	5-80	0-25	0	0
Zone 3 – Likely Tables	2-20	0-7	25-150	0-50	25-130	0-50
Zone 4 – Lassen	2-20	0-7	25-150	0-50	25-150	0-50
Zone 5 – Big Valley	1-15	0-5	3-150	0-50	0	0
Zone 6 – Surprise Valley	1-10	0	3-25	0-7	0	0
Big Valley Junior Hunt	N/A		1-15 Either-Sex		0	
Lassen Junior Hunt	N/A		1-15 Either-Sex		0	
Surprise Valley Junior Hunt	N/A		1-4 Either-Sex		0	
Fund-Raising Hunt	N/A		1-10 Buck			

(b) Authority and Reference:

Authority: Fish and Game Code sections 219, 220, 331, 1050 and 10502.
Reference: Fish and Game Code Sections 331, 713, 1050, 10500 and 10502.

(c) Specific Technology or Equipment Required by Regulatory Change:

None.

(d) Identification of Reports or Documents Supporting Regulation Change:

Final 2004 Environmental Document Regarding Pronghorn Antelope Hunting.

(e) Public Discussions of Proposed Regulations Prior to Notice Publication:

The Department conducted a public scoping session in Sacramento on December 11, 2003. Public input, discussions and recommendations regarding the environmental document and mammal hunting and trapping regulations were taken at this time. The Department held four public meetings in 2001 to discuss mammal hunting regulations in general. The dates and locations of those meetings are:

November 7, 2001- Fresno, California
November 13, 2001- San Diego, California
November 29, 2001- Monterey, California
December 13, 2001- Sacramento, California

While these meetings were conducted prior to the establishment of last years regulations, concepts and proposals resulting from these meeting are still being implemented as part of the current year regulatory process. Additionally, the Department held a public meeting on January 6, 2003 to discuss specific changes to mammal hunting regulations for 2004.

IV. Description of Reasonable Alternatives to Regulatory Action:

(a) Alternatives to Regulation Change:

1. Number of Tags

No alternatives were identified. Pronghorn antelope license tag quotas must be changed periodically in response to a variety of biological and environmental conditions.

(b) No Change Alternative:

1. Number of Tags

The no-change alternative was considered and rejected because it would not attain project objectives of providing for hunting opportunities while maintaining pronghorn antelope populations within desired population objectives. Retaining the current tag quota for each zone may not be responsive to biologically-based changes in the status of various herds. Management plans specify minimum desired buck to doe ratios which are attained/maintained in part by modifying tag quotas on an annual basis. The no-change alternative would not allow for adjustment of tag quotas in response to changing environmental/biological conditions.

(c) Consideration of Alternatives:

In view of information currently possessed, no reasonable alternative considered would be more effective in carrying out the purposes for which the regulation is intended, or as effective and less burdensome to the affected private persons than that which is currently being proposed.

V. Mitigation Measures Required by Regulatory Action:

The proposed regulatory action will have no negative impact on the environment; therefore, no mitigation measures are needed.

VI. Impact of Regulatory Action.

This proposed action adjusts tag quotas for existing hunts. Given the number of tags available, and the area over which they are distributed, this proposal is economically neutral to business.

(a) Significant Statewide Adverse Economic Impact Directly Affecting Businesses, Including the Ability of California Businessmen to Compete with Businesses in Other States.

The proposed action will not have a significant statewide adverse economic impact directly affecting business, including the ability of California businesses to compete with businesses in other states.

- (b) Impact on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State, the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses, or the Expansion of Businesses in California.

None.

- (c) Cost Impacts on Private Persons.

The agency is not aware of any cost impacts that a representative private person or business would necessarily incur in reasonable compliance with this proposed action.

- (d) Costs or Savings to State Agencies or Costs/Savings in Federal Funding to the State.

None.

- (e) Other Nondiscretionary Costs/Savings to Local Agencies.

None.

- (f) Programs Mandated on Local Agencies or School Districts.

None.

- (g) Costs Imposed on Any Local Agency or School District that is Required to be Reimbursed under Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4.

None.

- (h) Effect on Housing Costs.

None.

**INFORMATIVE DIGEST
(Policy Statement Overview)**

Existing regulations provide for the number of pronghorn antelope hunting tags for each hunt zone. This proposed regulatory action would provide for tag allocation ranges for most hunt zones pending final tag quota determinations based on winter survey results that should be completed by March of 2005. The final tag quotas will provide for adequate hunting opportunities while allowing for a biologically appropriate harvest of bucks and does in specific populations. The proposed tag allocation ranges for most hunt zones are as set forth below.

Pronghorn Antelope Tag Allocation Ranges - 2005						
Hunt Area	Archery-Only Season		General Season			
			Period 1		Period 2	
	Buck	Doe	Buck	Doe	Buck	Doe
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Zone 6 – Surprise Valley	1-10	0	3-25	0-7	0	0
Big Valley Junior Hunt	N/A		1-15 Either-Sex		0	
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Fund-Raising Hunt	N/A		1-10 Buck			

